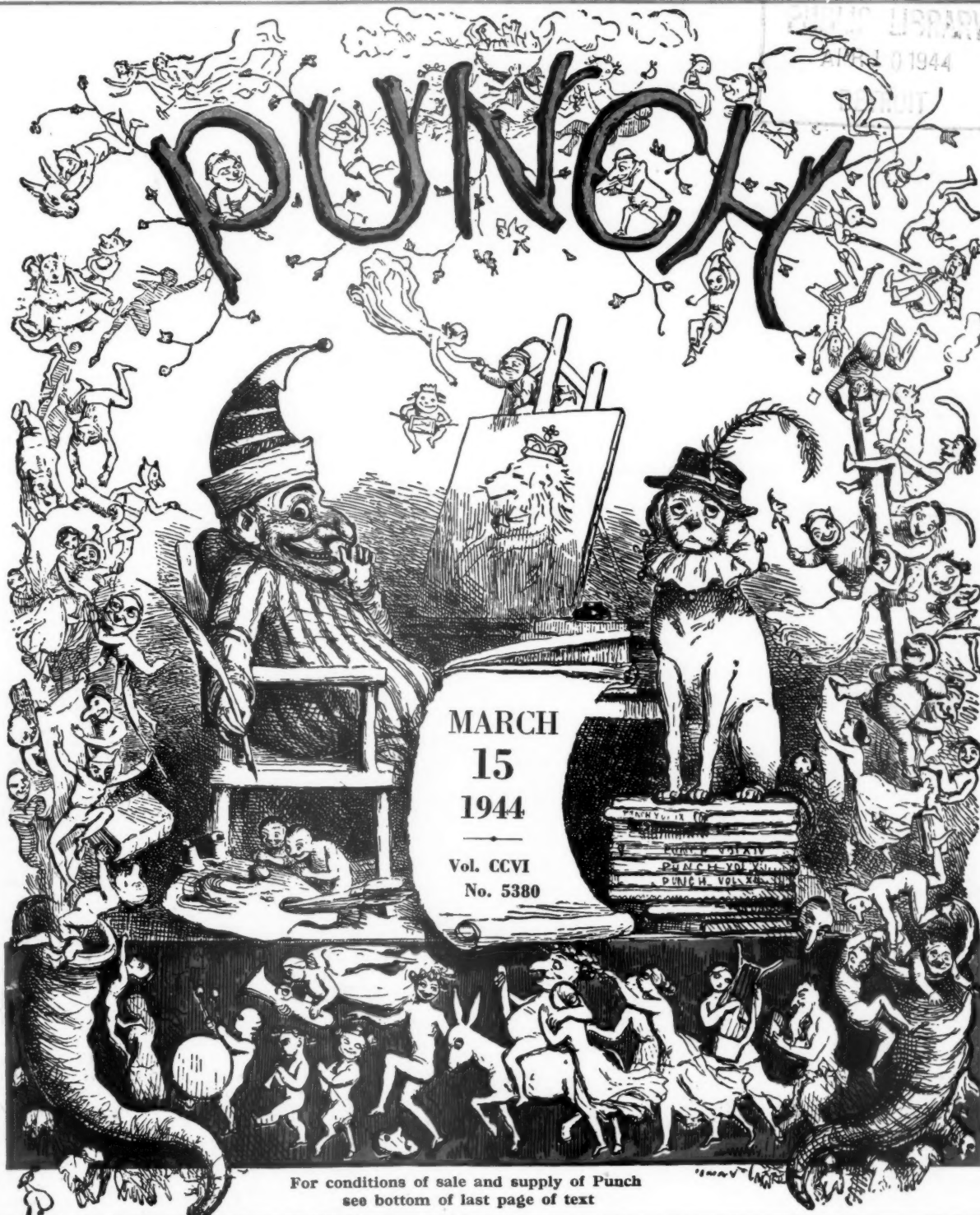


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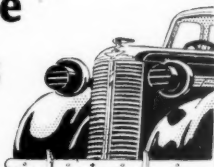


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The General Post Office is famous throughout the world. Nearly 20 million letters are collected by the Post Office and over 7 million telephone calls are dealt with daily; every year 70 million telegrams are transmitted. Over a third of the population entrust their savings to the Post Office Savings Bank. The King Edward Building is an all-one-piece structure, and such is the nature of the materials employed, that time serves only to increase its strength. Symbol of unflinching efficiency, the letters G.P.O. call to mind what millions throughout the world say of Champion Plugs, "There's Dependability for you!"

CLEAN PLUGS SAVE PETROL AND
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From an Army Chaplain in Italy



**"Some Sappers presented me with
a much battle-scarred tin of Barneys"**

"Sirs,

You may be disposed to consider this experience worthy of inclusion in your immortal world-saga of "Barneys" Tobacco.

One of the sad sights of Tobruk in the difficult days was the spectacle of sunken ships, a constant reminder of risks taken to provide us, and a formidable reason for the strictness of our rationing. Much later, when we were in Palestine, awaiting embarkation for the invasion of Sicily, some friendly Sappers presented me with a much battered and battle-scarred tin of Barneys "Punchbowl." This tin was actually one of the number salvaged from a wreck in that famous harbour! If the comely tin had lost its neat appearance, the tobacco had lost no whit of its freshness, but smoked as fragrant and cool as if I had bought it in Glasgow the day before.

I am again on "Barneys," a provident NAAFI having given me a share of recently arrived stocks (although not in the familiar flat tin) but the memory of that "Punchbowl" is not the least pleasant of my happy recollections of the Holy Land."

[The original letter can be inspected]

TRIBUTE TO JOHN SINCLAIR'S Barneys

★ Barneys (medium), Parsons Pleasure (mild),
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From Portugal...
the Traditional Wine
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PER 14'6 BOTTLE

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Wholesale Wine and Spirit Merchants, Distillers
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Cuticura
OINTMENT



Every Kershaw prism binocular is equipped with four of these modern jewels, made of specially manufactured optical glass having exactly the right refractive and dispersive qualities.

The angles of these jewels must be ground and polished to within a few minutes of exactness—a not-too-easy problem! The surfaces are at the same time ground and polished to an amazing degree of accuracy within a few millionths of an inch—and all perfectly free from blemishes and marks. As well as this, mechanical dimensions must be kept within fine limits to achieve the perfect optical jewel.

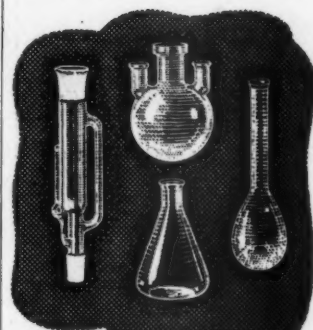
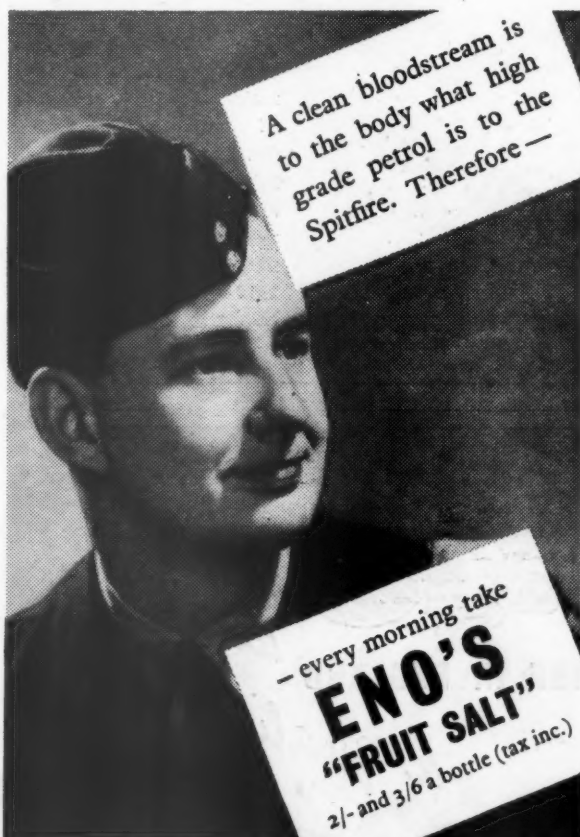
Four of these perfect prisms go into every Kershaw prism binocular.

When, after the war, you buy a Kershaw prism binocular you will buy PRECISION.

Bear in mind—KERSHAW means PRECISION.



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SCIENTIFIC GLASSWARE
Craftmanship at its best.

EVEN in this age of advanced scientific achievement there are still certain indispensable commodities that owe their existence to the skilled hand of the trained craftsman.

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PYREX Brand Scientific Glassware is supplied only through Laboratory Furnishers, but illustrated catalogue and two free copies of our Chemist's Notebook will be sent direct on application to us, which should be written on trade heading or accompanied by professional card.

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is made by



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Wear Glass Works,
SUNDERLAND.

I'VE SAID GOODBYE TO

Lack of Energy

Strenuous days tax strength and vitality. But it is a national duty to keep active and energetic in war-time. A cup of Allenburys Diet last thing at night fortifies the system



against the effects of nerve-strain and body-fatigue. Allenburys Diet is made from fresh creamy milk and whole wheat. It is prepared in a moment, needing only the addition of boiling water.

From all Chemists 2/4 and 4/6 a tin.

Made in England by Allen & Hanburys, Ltd.

**Allenburys
DIET**

D.37

Spring round-up!

Once again, the households of Britain are showing scenes of industrious dusting, polishing and clearing-out. That's fine! Clearing-out means a real opportunity to help in the national round-up of salvage.

What do I do...?

I remember that salvage means more munitions, so I hunt out every scrap from the loft, cupboards and drawers.

I put into the wastepaper collection any old newspapers, periodicals, diaries, postcards, broken cardboard boxes—in fact, all the waste paper I can find.

I keep a particular look-out for old rags which I cannot use for patching or any other useful purpose.

And I do not forget that string, bits of sacking, old carpet and rope are also wanted.

Issued by the Ministry of Information
Space presented to the Nation by
the Brewers' Society

All shrewd Judges smoke

Orlik BRIAR
PIPES

The demand for Orlik pipes far exceeds the supply, but the quality is still as good as ever. If you have difficulty in obtaining a genuine Orlik London Made pipe, please write to us for address of the nearest Tobacconist who can supply you.

L. ORLIK, LTD., LONDON, E.C.1
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Also PETROL LIGHTERS & POUCHES
Orlik wind-proof Petrol Lighters give a sure light for cigarette or pipe, indoors or out. Orlik Pouches in a variety of styles.



HOW MANY TUBES MAKE A LOT?



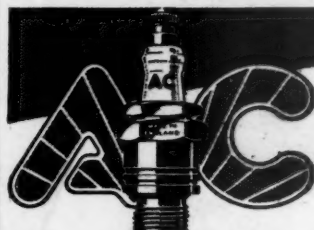
MADE BY TUBE PRODUCTS LTD
OLDBURY • BIRMINGHAM

Issued by TUBE INVESTMENTS LTD., Steel Tubes Advisory Centre, Birmingham.



T.36

It takes quite a few to make a lot in these days of speeded-up production. Hundreds of miles of Tru-Wel Tubes are mass-produced every week and they go into the making of hundreds of things, from push bikes to battleships.



MADE IN ENGLAND

as always—
a quality product

Wax

AT WAR...

Wax is the basis of all good Shoe Creams and Polishes. But wax is also used in the making of war materials. Meltonian Shoe Cream, noted for its polishing power and leather-preserving qualities, always has been and still is made from a blend of the best waxes, tested for over a century.

The makers of Meltonian Shoe Cream will not use uncontrolled substitute materials, incapable of maintaining the high standard of quality and efficiency for which this cream is famous. That is why sometimes you may find difficulty in getting Meltonian Shoe Cream. But stocks are fairly distributed and your retailer will have his quota, so go on asking for MELTONIAN... you may be lucky!

"Thank Goodness
for a household product of
real pre-war quality"

Goddard's
PLATE POWDER or LIQUID POLISH
the finest polishes for silverware



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household and embroidery

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**FURNISHING
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RHEUMATISM?
CURICONES
is the remedy
OBTAINABLE FROM ALL CHEMISTS



STORAGE AGAINST FUTURE NEED

No longer need the housewife dread the rising on a wintry morning to light a fire. The ESSE Cooker continuously alight is ready for cooking at any time. Burning anthracite, coke or Phurnacite it shows an amazingly low fuel consumption. Water Heaters in varying sizes can be supplied to make one unit.

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100% NON-SLIP

Furmoto shines floors like glass—produces a hard, tread-proof and waterproof surface on any kind of flooring and linoleum—yet on it you can't slip an inch. Because of this it is the only polish you should use. Avoid accident claims as result of anyone falling on slippery floors. You are absolutely safe with Furmoto, for with every tin is given

£100 FREE INSURANCE AGAINST SLIPPING

Sold in 2/- tins and larger sizes at Oilshops, Grocers, Ironmongers, Stores, etc.

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In case of difficulty write for name of nearest stockist to:
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There are
Blankets & BLANKETS



Soft lamb's wool blankets are hard to find to-day. Definitely pre-war, like "Moderna"

Blankets, of which their owners are justly proud!



We get many letters asking us: "Where can I get Moderna Blankets?" Unfortunately we must answer that we cannot make them till after the war, because we are only allowed to make Utility blankets to-day.



What we do make is the best that can be made, conforming to Government Regulations. But the "MODERNA" label will never be sewn on a blanket that cannot carry the "MODERNA" GUARANTEE of pure lamb's wool and unshrinkable. They'll come again!

Thomas RATCLIFFE
& Co. Ltd.
MYTHOLMROYD, YORKS.



You are "in pocket" in more than one sense when you wear a "GOR-RAY" Skirt with the new 'ZWOW' Pocket. The old, ugly placket has gone. In its place you have an unbroken hip line; and on the other side, an attractive, man-style pocket. There are no buttons or metal gadgets to cause hip bulge; and although the skirt fastens at the waistband, under-garments cannot possibly show through. Good drapers and stores everywhere stock "GOR-RAY" Skirts in a variety of attractive styles.

GOR-RAY
Skirts

All the better for the 'ZWOW' Pocket
Issued by:
C. STILLITZ, Royal Leamington Spa

Scientific



Don't trouble about tomorrow—until tomorrow. Leave it to your Ferranti Alarm Clock to have you up and doing. The better you start the better your chance to keep it going.

FERRANTI
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In the very unlikely event of your Ferranti Clock requiring attention send it to the Clock Servicing Department, Ferranti Ltd., Hollinwood, Lancs., where experts will quickly set it going—and keep it going.

THE BEST CIGARETTES IN THE WORLD
STATE EXPRESS 555

For over half a century
STATE EXPRESS 555
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of every description

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the name mean
to you?

It means that your foot is being taken care of in a very special way. First, the "Arch bridge" supports the all-important outer arch—stops strain and prevents sag. Next, the unique Metatarsal cushion protects the delicate bones across the ball of the foot. Finally, the Flat Innersole lets you walk on a flat surface, instead of crumpling up your toes in a trough. Arch Preserver Shoes are the only shoes with these three vital features combined. Fitting? Arch Preserver fitting must be tried to be believed. Remember the name—Arch Preserver. It guarantees all these qualities, not just some of them.

Selberite
ARCH PRESERVER Shoes

ARCH PRESERVER SHOE LTD. (London Office), 17-18 OLD BOND, ST., W.1

Uniform demands

A woman demands from her uniform all those qualities she expects from tailor-made garments. We have been making good clothes for men for many years, and our customers in the women's services tell us that now they know why their menfolk have always been so enthusiastic about the Austin Reed Service.

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For
Extra Smartness
the shoes of
more & more
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USE SPARINGLY - THE SUPPLY IS RESTRICTED



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RUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCVI No. 5380

March 15 1944

Charivaria

RUSSIAN scientists have succeeded in obtaining sugar from moss. This is one war material Hitler's steam-rolling stone did not gather.

Springtime in the Balkans has been heralded this year by the blooming of an unusually large crop of early crises.



Perhaps the critic who recently asserted that non-Axis countries are too slow in showing signs of aggression would do better to reserve his opinions until after the peace conference.

"Londoners are meeting in strange out-of-the-way places of the world," says a writer. Occasionally of course they meet in London.

A caricature of Napoleon was offered for sale recently, which reminds us that the Allies hope very soon to be disposing of another one.

Transformation Scene

'LE PANTO'

"4.45
G.K. Chesterton's poem of Don John of Austria, read by Valentine Dyall."—Radio programme.

In view of the general direction of the Wehrmacht's masterly advance it is surprising that Hitler hasn't yet claimed to be saving the Russians from Bolshevism.

The fact that the Army has not downed arms since September 1939 should not be taken as an indication that it is not interested in the subject of increased pay and allowances.

A Nazi broadcaster claims to have seen black-and-white evidence of underground movements in London. He can take it from us that if it's an L.P.T.B. time-table it's out of date.

Tight Fit

"Other dancers were: May H— wearing a pretty green and white dress, Pam S— and Pam H— in a blue evening dress."
Bournemouth paper.

A visitor who recently arrived in London spent hours seeking accommodation before he obtained a shake-up for the night.

We really can't understand why so many people so hotly resent British Double Summer Time. After all, it isn't as though we had to have a double British summer to go with it.

"America and Great Britain have similar predominating features," says a recently-arrived American soldier. Apart from Americans, he means.

We now expect German radio commentators to make much of the fact that the recent University Boat-Race was rowed with specially constructed light landing-craft.



The Story of David

NOW that Mr. Duff Cooper has written a romantic eulogy of this great king, and Lord Wavell (annotating an anthology) has replied that he doesn't think much of the fellow but really prefers King Saul, I think it only fair to give the views of an eminent Higher Critic on David, whom I myself have always regarded as a kind of sacred personage and the author of no small part of the Book of Common Prayer.

Interviewed in his country home at Cricklewood this Higher Critic said: "King Saul and King David were national heroes, but the court of neither of them would have appealed to Alfred Lord Tennyson as a subject for a series of Idylls: Saul (from whom the Afghans claim to be descended) was superstitious and violent. David, on the other hand, would have given a poor rendering of Arthur's final speech to Queen Guinevere. But they were Oriental tyrants both, and as such they must be judged. Let us see what David as a practical man achieved.

I will pass over rapidly what is usually remembered about him: He was a shepherd, a handsome lad (less likeable when he grew up), a great harper and a singer of songs, sharing this talent with King Alfred and other famous kings; but his dancing was severely criticized by his wife. This again is not unusual. The boy made a successful attack on Goliath, cheating (I should imagine) from the point of view of the Philistines, who probably expected a hand-to-hand combat with swords. It was an early example of the aerial *blitzkrieg*. He became a favourite and a warrior, the friend of Saul's son, rebelled against Saul and killed him as well as Jonathan, made more songs to appease the people, sinned and repented, and was the acknowledged fighter of a fierce and still unimportant little tribe which looted right and left, massacred their prisoners and mutilated the dead.

He behaved disgracefully (after becoming king) about Uriah's wife, whom he stole. He ordered General Joab (now in charge of his armies) to send the poor man on a suicide mission; and Joab thereupon concluded his dispatch from H.Q. with the most awful postscript in human history. "Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also." No dramatic battle story in the literature of the world contains any comparable communiqué.

David went on fighting. He had many wives, more than Saul if fewer than Solomon, but he preferred Bath-sheba in the end. He was rather afraid of his generals and his ecclesiastics, and there were bitter feuds among both. But neither these few points which I have set down nor the many others which I have omitted satisfy the mind of

a political economist and a military historian like myself. Quite clearly David was an Empire Builder, like Mussolini. If you doubt it, reflect that he introduced universal military conscription, against the desire of General Joab and the prophet Gad, who was a little-Israelite. In nine months Joab produced an army of 800,000 valiant recruits from Israel, and (counting Judah) 1,300,000 enlisted men. That is a lot, and perhaps a recount should have been ordered. In spite of military and clerical opposition and the pestilence which followed the latter it is quite clear that the measure went through, and that vast conquests followed. The list of David's 'mighty men' and their nationalities would be enough to show it, and in one case where conciliation was preferred to invasion he absorbed the Gibeonites by handing over to them Saul's grandson to be killed.

Only this tremendous army and the victories it won could have produced the apes, the ivory, the peacocks, the gold, the cedar-wood and the wives that adorned the court of King Solomon, and made possible the ensuing triumphs of religious and domestic architecture and the admiration of neighbouring potentates. It is a pity that the private memoirs of the Queen of Sheba have been lost to the world; but lost they are.

Consider rather the mercantile and industrial aspects of the situation. What exports had the new empire of Palestine to offer in return for the profusion of commodities it enjoyed? It may have taken a commission in goods re-exported to the east or the south, but only, I think, because of its military strength, for it used the fleets of Tyre and Sidon, and King Hiram was not at all satisfied with the payment he received. The extent and magnificence of King Solomon's domains is the more remarkable because there was a dispute about the succession. One of King David's pontifical advisers, Abiathar, took the side of Adonijah."

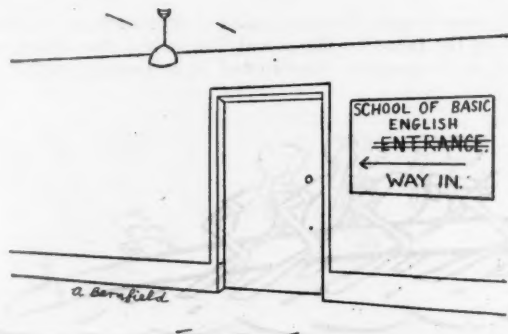
"Adonijah?" I said.

"Yes, the eldest son. General Joab took this side. The principal expansionist prophet Nathan, who must have hated Gad, took the side of Solomon. So did General Benaiah the second in command. And David in his last will and testament gave to Benaiah the task of liquidating Joab, which was faithfully performed. The reminiscences of Joab would have been as interesting as the reminiscences of the Queen of Sheba. This general and his brothers had held David in their power for years, but he secured a death-bed revenge. With their help, or in spite of it, he had made a huge kingdom, sometimes defying them, sometimes submitting to them. Sometimes again he resisted, sometimes followed the advice of his prophets, but always showed great penitence when they called him to heel.

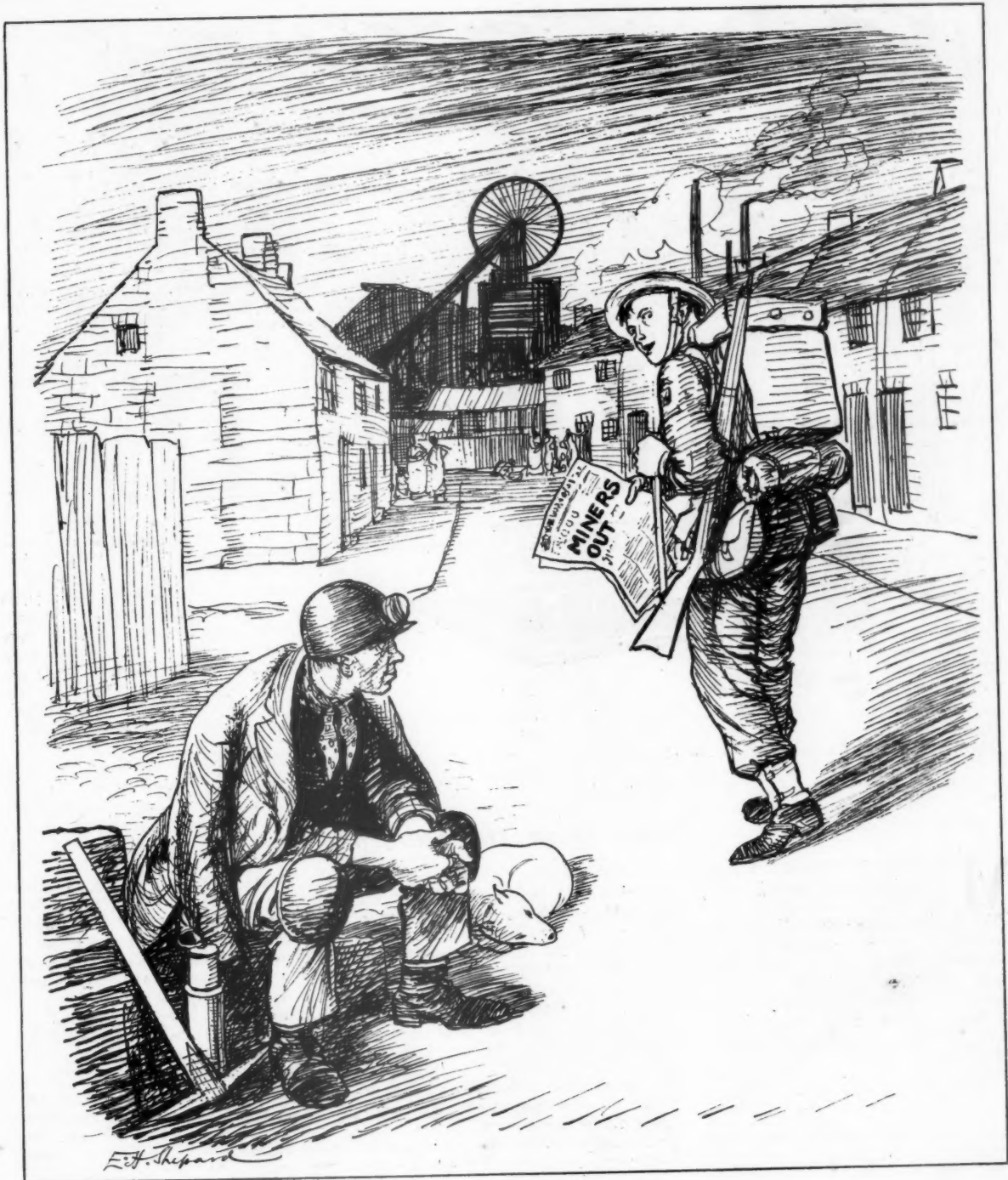
That, apart from theology and poetry and sentiment, seems to be the tale, as it has been handed down to us. Part of it comes from what we should call Government, part from Opposition sources, part from folk-lore. It is stated that Sheeva was King David's scribe. We do not know how he kept his records or how often they were revised, but he must have been a man of considerable tact and aplomb. After the death of Solomon of course the empire of Palestine fell to pieces like a full-blown rose."

I went away in tears. Somehow it all seemed to be so dreary and sad.

EVOE.

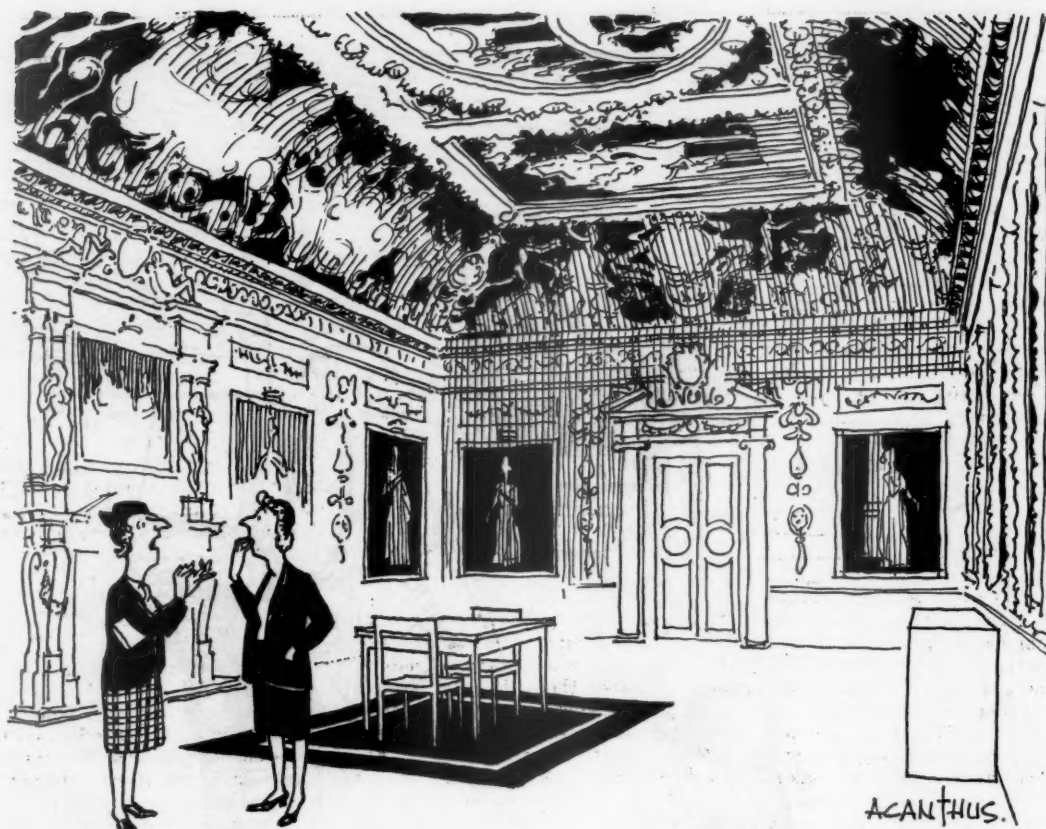


The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



STRIKING IN THE WEST

"When are you going to put up your Iron Cross?"



"You'll have to do something to this room to match your Utility furniture."

News from the Suburbs

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I have got mixed up in the sea again, this time in a duck.

You know what these ducks are like—small barges on wheels, with a propeller sticking out at the back, which looks very odd when you overtake them on the road. Inside they are just a hollow tank and a driver sitting in front looking at notices which say:

Maximum speed on smooth road . . . m.p.h.
 " " " sea . . . knots

and things like that, even more amphibious and confusing.

My contact with the organization which operates these things was purely fortuitous. I just happened to say that they looked jolly dangerous to me, and someone said, "Oh, no, they're not. Take a ride in one and see," and in no time I was sitting alongside

a driver, bowling down a smooth stretch of sand, looking, I supposed, for a suitable gap in the waves in order to make a sharp left-hand turn out to sea. We were on the banks of an estuary, and I could not help noticing that there was quite a heavy sea breaking on the sand-banks outside.

The driver said he had been a Thames waterman before the war, mostly on the dumb barges that drift idly by with the tide, which seemed to me no adequate preparation for handling a thing like a duck. In fact the first thing you do notice when you do put to sea is how much closer the sea is to the top edge of the vessel than the ground is when it is a vehicle. However, we headed rapidly out towards the sand-banks.

"I took one of these in at Salerno," the driver said. "Proper picnic it was and no mistake. We had a bloke from

the Royal Navy on board, a commander 'e was, and 'e kept us fair splitting our sides. 'Over' and 'Short,' 'e would say, and 'Ard aport and 'e won't get us,' and 'e was right every time. Them bombers might as well 'ave stayed at 'ome."

A wave slid over the bonnet (or fore-castle) and lapped against the windscreen. It was undoubtedly rough outside, I thought.

"Mind you," the driver went on, "them bombs make a 'orrid wave when they goes off in the water and before you know where you are you're swimming for it."

I looked down at my waist. Before I embussed (or embarked) I had been given a narrow rubber life-belt, just a flat rubber tube in its inoperative state. By pressing one section of the belt hard, I had apparently released some chemical which had blown the belt

up. As it had been fitted quite tightly when flat, it now was causing a good deal of pressure on my central section. No doubt that would prevent the seawater from flowing below a certain point, but at the moment it felt as though it were preventing anything else from flowing below that point, too. On the other hand, it would clearly keep my middle from sinking. Whether my feet or my head would be the section held above the surface seemed to be a matter of chance.

"And then," the driver went on, "you 'ad to watch out for engine failure. I remember another day when she stops dead, seized up, it seemed, and the commander was proper vexed. 'Orrocks,' 'e says, 'the General's waiting for me and them 'Einkels is waiting for me and you 'as to stop.' So I puts 'im in another ship and drifts ashore meself. And what do you think it was?"

We were now about one hundred yards from the breakers and still heading out to sea. I had thought of mentioning to Horrocks that I should be getting back, but it was no good interrupting his story.

"A blinking vine 'ad wound itself around the propeller," he said with a chuckle, wiping the spray from his face. "Fancy that now, 'aving a ship stopped by a blinking vine-tree, simply because you'd 'ad to make a kind of diversion that morning on shore 'cos they were shelling the cross-roads. Mind you," he went on, "it don't do to get broached to in one of these craft. I've seen some that's made that mistake. Of course the Mediterranean's not so cold."

Not so the estuary, I thought. He suddenly went into reverse (or hard astern) to avoid the nearest sand-bank and then turned sharply to the off (or starboard) on a course that ran parallel with the waves.

"I was proper unlucky with the commander," he continued. "It couldn't 'ave been more than three days after that when he comes to me early in the morning and says, 'Orrocks, I must find the general ashore, and mind you don't get no seaweed in the carburettor.' Seaweed in the carburettor! I 'ad to laugh. But it wasn't no laughing matter. It was proper rough, like it is to-day." He looked seaward with a knowledgeable glance and I was glad to have my views confirmed. I should have said it was blowing about a three-quarter gale, not to exaggerate.

"It's a good job you weren't sitting where you are now, sir. That's where we got the cannon-shell through the windscreen. On the way in, that was.

"THEY ALSO SERVE"

THEY are brave, these people who, behind the scenes, whether at home or in the factories, go quietly about their essential tasks. Even when they are bombed and lose their homes and cherished possessions, their grateful appreciation of the help given them through the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND proclaims the spirit which cannot be broken.

The privilege of service to them is extended to you. If you have helped us with contributions before will you please help us again? If this is your first introduction to the Fund will you please become a subscriber? Donations will be gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

He came streaking along the water at us and the commander says 'He's too low, he can't depress enough to get us,' and then the shell comes through the windscreen and the commander laughs out loud and says 'Wrong again, 'Orrocks,' and I says nothing. So we lands on the beach and sets off to find the general."

I made no comment, as I was not thinking about Salerno at that moment. Every third wave was slopping over the edge of the duck and I was on the look-out for seventh waves. We were now out of the lee of the sand-banks.

"Well," Horrocks went on, "we was directed up a straight bit of road and, all of a sudden, just as we drew alongside a couple of burnt-out lorries, there was a shell-burst in front and another behind and the commander says 'It wasn't like this yesterday,' and I says 'No, sir,' and he says urgent-like 'Well, step on it,' and I steps on it all right and we fair whizzes down that road, with the 'Un artillery chasing us for all they was worth; and some nice shooting they put in, too, I must say. But we just beats 'em to the next village and we hits that at a good thirty-five, and all of a sudden there is a bang and we finds ourselves in the side of a 'ouse. And would you believe what done it?"

I repressed a temptation to say. "Mice," and shook my head. We were now rolling very heavily and I could feel the water washing over my feet.

"A blinking beer-bottle, sir. After all that, dive-bombed, shelled, let alone the chance of shipwreck and

drowning, we 'as to run over a beer-bottle and blow a front tyre. The commander was proper mad, but 'is general 'appened to be in that village so 'e 'adn't lost no time and they soon 'as 'is 'ead stitched up. Proper anti-climax it was, the sergeant said."

Horrocks sighed.

"I reckon we ought to be getting back, sir," he said. "She won't stand much more in this sea."

"That's fine," I replied. "You can't go back soon enough for me."

"You quite satisfied, sir?" he asked.

"How do you mean?" I replied.

"Oh, I thought you was testing it, sir. Sergeant says you probably wants to make a test in bad weather or something."

We got ashore all right, and it was a most interesting trip. Fortunately I had a change of clothes near at hand, and those life-belts make it absolutely safe, particularly if you're off a stretch of coast that has a good life-boat.

Your loving son HAROLD.

Verboten

IN Germany, a heavy land,
Obedience reigns an iron rule;
Reluctance marks the idiot and
A mild forgetfulness the fool,
And mailed fist and eagle eye
Are healthily employed just now
To purge from sin and purify
The frau'lein and the frau.

They have, it seems, acquired a trick
Too grave, too culpable by half
Of sitting darkly at a flick
And laughing when they shouldn't
laugh;
And hence there comes a stern decree
To mend their ways lest ill befall,
And, as they can't laugh properly,
They're not to laugh at all.

But there is worse. For, lost in doubt
Of what mischance may lie ahead,
They seek the fortune-tellers out
And pay to have the future read,
But not for long this traffic thrives;
Sharp is the word and swift the ban;
And daughters, nieces, aunts and wives
Must guess as best they can.

I trust no sudden comic bits,
No airy flight of custard pies,
Will make them laugh themselves to fits
Before they've time to shut their eyes,
Or those whom occult paths attract
Need hardly have their fortunes told.
What's coming to them, as a fact,
They'll learn before they're old.

DUM-DUM.

At the Pictures

FOUNDED ON FACT

THERE is much that is by any standard good in *Madame Curie* (Director: MERVYN LEROY), and no doubt it is my own fault that nearly all of it left me feeling completely detached. Like any other film, the piece naturally sets out to arouse human sympathy rather than intellectual respect for its illustrious subject, because human sympathy is the easiest common denominator to aim at in the vast film audience. It is the usual trouble with the film biography of genius: the paradox that, as the audience cannot be made to understand intellectual power, it has to be made to admire and sympathize with the possessor solely because he or she displays human virtues and suffers human misfortunes. But these are suffered and displayed by people in any other kind of film; so where is the impression of genius to come from?

Here we are supposed to get it from certain snatches of talk that are over our heads ("But 2π times K over 2 excludes the identity transformation") and the thought of the tremendous grinding concentration and industry that produced the isolation of radium. Well, as I say, it is perhaps my own fault that I didn't; but my feeling is that a really good film of this kind ought to make me sympathize with and believe in the greatness of its subject even without my knowledge that the story it tells is true, and only by constantly reflecting that Marie and Pierre Curie really did all this under just such difficulties could I work up the proper sensation of awe. Luckily there are more people who will easily get the right sensation of awe, even though they get it for the wrong reasons—from the discovery that the great scientists were also ordinary human beings. For them, probably for nearly everybody, this is a sound, worthy, skilfully done, impressive and enjoyable film.

Another true story is *The Sullivans* (Director: LLOYD BACON);

but here the emphasis on everyday simplicity is justified, for these were simple people. Albert, Francis, George, Joseph and Madison Sullivan were brothers who made a point of doing everything together, and the film

action in 1942. For most of its length the picture is a story of the life of a large, noisy, affectionate Irish family in an American small town: we see the boys at the height of their local reputation for pugnacity ("That's not their fighting walk"), getting into the kinds of trouble that innumerable films have shown us before. If you are disposed to be bored by this sort of stuff, bored you will be; but the audience when I was there greeted each familiar situation with the rowdiest delight. (I believe that many people, so far from objecting to clichés in a film of children, positively have a conviction that it is specially clever of the children themselves to be using them.) The best of the film belongs to THOMAS MITCHELL and SELENA ROYLE as the father and mother; particularly to Miss ROYLE, who has some admirable moments. This is what is called a "family picture": you will enjoy it if you have a taste for simple joys, simple sorrows, and simple fun, and have no objection to one of those radiant-sky gateway-to-paradise fade-outs.



[*Madame Curie*]

TAKING POT-LUCK

Marie Curie GREER GARSON
Pierre Curie WALTER PIDGEON

shows them doing everything together (Al, the youngest, last in everything else, made up for it by being first to marry), until they are all killed together in the Guadalcanal naval



[*The Sullivans*]

A WHOLE-TIME DADDY

Mr. Sullivan THOMAS MITCHELL

Time Flies (Director: WALTER FORDE), though unsatisfactory in the customary manner of British farces, has points; but it makes all the old mistakes (as always, the biggest is that of setting part of the scene in the U.S., complete with imitation Americans, in the touching belief that this is the way to please the U.S. market). The piece involves TOMMY HANDLEY (1943) with a number of historical characters in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, by means of a device that behaves like Mr. Wells's Time Machine and looks like the ball used by his First Men in the Moon. Otherwise the fun owes most to Mark Twain's Yankee at King Arthur's Court. There are opportunities for the comic juxtaposition of solemn, pompous Wardour Street Elizabethan English and modern wisecracks in the "Itma" manner (TED KAVANAGH was one of the script-writers). The experience and vitality of TOMMY HANDLEY and his way with the "Itma" sort of joke give the film a lift; but to be a really good farce it needs more. R. M.

THE CLUB NEWS BOARD



Some members read the latest news first and then work backwards—



Others start on the earliest news of the day and come gradually up to date—



and that is why the crowded hours are sometimes just rather a scramble.

The Admiral's Moan

I'M fed to the teeth with this life (said the Admiral). Crew of three and what a crew! Joan, who works "part time" at the local hospital—9 to 4; Mrs. Masters, mutinous woman if ever there was one, who would have been clapped in irons in the good old days; and old Barnacle, who spends most of his time in the potting-shed, smoking, spitting and grouching—leaving owner to carry coals, split wood and do all the dirty work in an old pair of dungarees a second-class stoker might have worn coaling ship at Port Said.

And listen to my log to-day:

Seven o'clock. Shake a leg, yawn and tumble out. Tub, shave, make bed, let Crusoe out for his run.

Raise steam in galley, boil eggs, wet tea, and pipe Joan to breakfast. After the chew put some breeze into her tyres and shove her off.

Light pipe, read letters and paper for ten minutes—waiting for Mrs. Masters to come alongside. Drown

her excuses for being late as usual with noise of sifting cinders from ashes. Discover Crusoe has been sick on deck. Wash down and paddle out to feed ducks interrupted by shouts of:

"Where 'ave you put my enamel pan?" from char.

"What 'ave you done with my shovel?" from Barnacle.

Produce both and scull off to the shop for tea. Char says none left for her elevenses. . . .

No good chewing the rag like this, but that kind of work goes on right into the dog watches.

However, I'll swear that as soon as this rough-house comes to an end and the Huns and Yellow-bellies have got what's coming to 'em, I'll shove all our gear into dock, put the char on the beach and Barnacle into the empty hull as care-and-maintenance party, and buy a canal barge.

Joan will easily run the galley and the two-berth cabin, and swab the deck too.

Whilst I, with Crusoe beside me will lean back on the tiller happily smoking and humming a shanty which curses strikers, shirkers, chars and odd men in true bargee lingo.

Come on, let's hear the news and then take Joan out to the westward for a bit of scan. . . .

He switched on as "Love from Doris" was just fading out.

o o

The New Agriculture

"Meanwhile, our indomitable Russian comrades, apart from the Finnish possibilities, are making hay of the German strong-points while the frost holds."

East Anglian paper.

o o

"Cook-General and housemaid to run two-storeyed house on tram lines."

Advt. in Scottish paper.

Right away?



"But why do they want to hold a by-election here of all places?"

Ode On the Names of Ladies

WHAT shall I call you? Yes, I know your name
Is Mabel Standish Henrietta Platt.
But could a human, British heart in flame
Content itself with that?

Your name should strike a spark
As do your eyes,
A beacon in the dark,
A big surprise,
So that all hearts are happy at the sound,
Devils their steps retrace,
Stars fall from heaven, old men leap and bound,
Earthquakes take place.
How dull are all these Muriels and Joans!
They do not light a fever in the bones.
They do not cause
Rivers to pause,
Or spring from stones.

What shall I call you, Platt?
I never met
A girl called Tulip yet:
I wonder much at that.
Thunder? Or Lightning? Taffeta? or Tulle?
(Not too romantic, no, but very cool.)

I know a Patience, and a Prudence too;
And there are Hope, and Joy, and all that lot.
Would Punctuality or Wisdom do?
No, I think not.
I like the names the nursery knows so well:
Deep in my soul
Sago and Tapioca ring a bell,
And Golden Roll.
Or shall I seek your title in the wood?
Cedar? Or Willow? Chestnut? Pretty good.
I think that Crocus is a pretty name,
And so is Nectarine—
Well, Rose and Celandine are much the same:
See what I mean?
Or shall I call you Moss?
That has a velvet gloss
And speaks of soft repose:
Or something fragrant: Thyme—
Lemon, perhaps—or Lime.
I like all those.

Or shall we to the chemist's lair repair?
For he has many names of magic there.
Kiss me, Ammonia—Aspirin as well:
Kiss me, Cinchona—kiss me, Calomel:
Kiss me, Magnesia of the marble brow,
Fair Lady Bismuth—Nay, I have it now!
I know what name
Can heal a heart,
Kindle a flame
And soothe a smart.
You touch a finger and the finger glows,
Iodine,
Warm as the sun, aseptic as the snows,
Iodine.
Or is it Iodene?—one never knows,
Iodine,
Or Eeodeen?—No, no,
I will not have it so!

Iodine,
You are mine?
That's fine.

A. P. H.

O Canada!

IT is a great privilege to have so many men from the
Dominions and Colonies as guests in our own country—
and a great opportunity. I always make a point of
finding out a bit more about the Empire when I come
across one of them—not a stream of tiresome questions,
you know; there's no need for that; just a quiet question
or two at the start and then let them talk. They like to
talk about home and their people and the climate and
country, and so on. It does them good, I think, and it
certainly does us good to listen. After all, the more we
know about the other members in the great Commonwealth
of Nations the better, don't you agree?
For instance, I had an interesting chat with a Canadian
just lately.

"Bitter?" he asked me, in that delightfully free and
easy way they have.

Well, to cut a long story short, I accepted. People
who are out to make mischief, inspired from Berlin some
of them are, no doubt, may like to repeat the old parrot-cry
about the British being willing to drink to the last Canadian

cent and the last Australian penny. Well, let them. I can nail *that* falsehood to the mast straight away, because this was the second round and the first had been on me. One wouldn't mention that sort of thing in the ordinary way—I mean it's the sort of thing one takes for granted over here, but when there's malicious talk about it's got to be nipped in the bud right at the start. We're too modest, as a people, I'm told; don't like talking about ourselves and all that. It's right too, but in war-time you've got to do it. One-and-ten the round cost me, including another chap who had to catch a train.

Anyway, I soon had this Canadian talking.

"What part do you come from?" I asked. I always ask them that.

He said Nova Scotia, unless that's giving information away to the enemy, in which case he said something else.

"Nova Scotia!" I said, in that keen sort of voice people use when they are just about to add that they've got an aunt who lives somewhere around those parts. "Let me see now, that would be mostly French Canadians, I suppose?"

"About half and half," he said. "And some Indians."

"Indians, eh!" I said, still in the same keen voice, though not meaning to imply of course that any of my aunts were Red Indians. "What sort of soldiers do they make, these Indian chaps?"

"Pretty good," he said.

"I suppose they would be," I said. "Swift and silent and all that. Good scouts?"

"Pretty good scouts," he said.

"I mean Scouts," I said—"Scouting."

"Yeah, that's right," he said. "Scouting. They run pigeon-toed, you know, feet turned in."

"Do they now?" I cried, delighted. "I never knew that."

"Right on the side of the foot," he added. "Not like us. Right sort of over on the side."

"Why do you suppose they do that?" I asked. "I don't see the point of that."

"I don't know," he said. "That's just naturally the way they run, over on the side."

"Something to do with not treading on twigs, maybe," I said; "when they're hunting, you know—on the trail."

"Hell," he said—not angrily, but just the way they say "Hell," to introduce a statement of fact. "Hell, you can tread on a twig just as easy with the side of your foot as you can with the flat!"

Well, of course, so you can when you come to think of it. So I left the subject of feet and tried another line.

"How are they on discipline?" I asked.

"Pretty good," he said. "Now and again one of 'em may turn a bit awkward if he gets too much to drink."

"Ah!" I said, sure of my ground here. "Fire-water, eh?"

"Pardon?" he said.

"Fire-water," I repeated. "Paleface poison. Whisky, to you and me."

"U-huh," he said. "Or gin."

Well, what do you know about that! Red Indians and gin! That's the sort of thing you'd never get from the history books or Fenimore Cooper, or any of those. You've got to talk to the chaps who've been there and *know*, to get on to a thing like that. Like me, you probably thought it was only Dutch planters and beach-combers in the Pacific who had a weakness for gin. Now, you see, we've got a chance of seeing Charles Laughton as Chief Horse's Neck letting down the whole tribe by stepping on a twig, simply because he's too sodden with

gin to walk properly on the sides of his feet. There's glory for you.

After this we spoke of some of the most romantic parts of the great North American continent, about which I am always hungry for information. We spoke of the fruit farms of British Columbia, of the cattle lands of Alberta, the great wheat plains of Saskatchewan, of Winnipeg, the mighty grain centre of the Dominion, of the far, frozen wastes of the north and the rich mineral deposits in the Rockies.

However, as it turned out, he hadn't been to any of these places, so we spoke instead of the Canadian Pacific Railway of which he had of course heard.

"They say," I said, "that one can travel for days on that line of yours without getting anywhere. No, I don't quite mean that. I mean, it's an awfully long way between stations, isn't it? Not everywhere of course, but in the parts where the stations are few and far be—that is in the places where there aren't many places, like—er—well, like Saskatchewan?"

"Well, naturally," he said. "Hell, it's a three-day trip right over. Or maybe it's more. I forget right now."

"I suppose people don't have to stand in the corridor all that way?" I asked.

He said No they didn't. Seats were provided, he said, and beds, and things to eat and drink.

"Two bitters, Ma'am," he said at this point.

"No, no," I said. "Look here, it's my turn."

"Hell," he said. "So long's we get the bitter."

Well, to cut a long argument short, I accepted. But I didn't like it, I tell you frankly. It's just the sort of thing they get hold of in Berlin and twist round to suit their own purposes.

After that I asked him about Niagara, but he hadn't been there, as it turned out.

"It must be a fine sight," I said, "all the same." Goodness knows what I meant by "all the same," but that's what I said.

"Pretty good," he admitted.

You know, I think these Canadians are too modest about their own country, when all's said and done.

H. F. E.



"How many unreadable copies are we supposed to type before we can change the ribbon?"



"But not a single thing was stolen—THAT's what we can't get over."

Song of the Die-Caster

THE collars went, the bowlers went,
The pin-stripes and vicunas went,
The brollies went,
We also went
To join the M.A.P.
The order now is steel-clad clogs,
Singlets, gauntlets, cast-off togs,
We're happy little well-oiled cogs
Of war's machineree. . . .

Chorus: Heat and spray and chill the die
And heat the die again;
Drop the cowl, flux and skim,
Fill the ladle to the brim,
Lightly, swiftly,
Steeplly, deftly,
Pour the molten metal in,
Break the die and make the die
And fill the die again—
Count the cooling castings on the rack.

The furnace and the pot are hot,
The alum and the die are hot,
The oven's hot
And what is not
Does not amount to much;
A shining casting's very hot,
A dull one may not prove so hot
(It might be cold—and it might not),
You test before you touch!

Chorus: Spray the die and chill the die
And flash the die again;
Mind the blow-holes in the base,
Watch for sinks along the face,
Take it slower,
Ladle lower,
Slide the molten metal in,
Fake the die and make the die
And break the die again—
Count the cooling castings on the rack.

Ease the core and heave 'er clear,
Tap the sides and lever clear,
Ejector clear,
And casting clear,
New bridge and brasses in;
Sides closed, and see the clamps are clear,
Core down and the hydraulic clear,
Clamps on and blow the riser clear
To pour the metal in. . . .

Chorus: Heat the die and treat the die
And heat the die again;
Watch for cracks, it's getting dim,
Chill that lug along the rim,
Ready, steady,
Slowly, surely,
Pour the molten metal in,
Break the die and make the die
And bake the die again—
Count the cooling castings on the rack.



TROUBLE WITH THE LUFTWASSER

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, March 7th.—House of Commons: A Tale of the Sea.

Wednesday, March 8th.—House of Commons: Thin Debate on Nutrition.

Thursday, March 9th.—House of Commons: Education Bill—*ad infinitum*.

Tuesday, March 7th.—There is nothing the House of Commons likes better than a good sea-story. Members like to listen to the exploits of the Royal Navy, and when the story has a happy ending (or at least some very happy chapters, with every prospect of a happy ending) enthusiasm knows no bounds.

So when Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER, First Lord of the Admiralty, rose, planked down on the Dispatch Box a great wad of notes, and began his tale, M.P.s leaned forward in their seats, cupped their ears with their hands, and generally showed signs of intense interest.

Everybody knows—now—that in the last war the U-boats nearly strangled Britain's war effort. Everybody was resigned to the fact that in this war something of the same sort might happen. So it was with joy (not unmixed with surprise) that the House heard Mr. ALEXANDER say that our losses in 1943 were "below our most optimistic hopes," and that our losses in the second half of the year were less than one in a thousand of the ships which sailed the seas on our behalf.

Nowadays the Merchant Navy has to heed an adaptation of the old saying about smoke and fire, and to make it read that "Where there's smoke there must be submarines." So some bright being has invented a gadget which swallows the smoke a ship makes and enables the vessel to steam with the unsmothered clean calm of a sailing-yacht. This makes it less easy for the prowling subs to find their prey. More than 600 sets of this ingenious contrivance have been delivered already, and still more are on the way.

It had all been so sudden, this turn for the better in our maritime affairs—so sudden that it "was impossible to exaggerate" the swiftness of the change. A year ago, on March 20th, losses had leaped up to reach a new high level. Packs of U-boats had threatened to defeat the convoy system.

We therefore devised special reinforcement groups of warships that could go to the aid of threatened convoys. In the last ten days of that

same month sinkings dropped by two-thirds.

What was more, they had never so far risen again to the old grim figure. It had taken great fights, sometimes lasting for days, to make the seas unsafe for Dictatorship, yet, said Mr. ALEXANDER, when the time came to look back on it all, those actions might be listed with the decisive actions of history.

But—Mr. A. Hitler was doing his best to improve the aggressive power of his U-boats, and there *might* yet be an upward swing of the graph of sinkings. We could never relax, and the bombing of the yards where the



SEA POWER
THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY

submarines are made had (as the First Lord moderately put it) "certainly reduced the rate of output."

We were, inevitably, losing warships from time to time, and the famed cruiser *Penelope* was among the casualties off Nettuno. Total naval losses in the Italian campaign were two cruisers, a minelayer, ten destroyers, two submarines and ten minor vessels. All too great, these losses, but mercifully less than they might well have been.

A gallant and thrilling story, and one that—like the stories the other Service Ministers have already told—is not yet at its climax. The House reflected the confidence of the country that the happiness of that climax is not in doubt.

There was a debate on every aspect

of the Navy's work, and this drifted off into a discussion on education in the Senior Service, a subject which Mr. PHILLIPS PRICE was able to raise because he had won a place in Mr. Speaker's annual sweepstake. Mr. PRICE wanted more education for the Navy, and he wanted it imparted better, and he wanted those who imparted it to be better paid for doing so.

There is one rule that ought to be abolished: the rule which dictates that a Whip shall not speak in the House. All these years it has been depriving the House of a man who was discovered to-day to be one of its best, brightest, and most forceful speakers: Mr. "JIM" THOMAS, Financial Secretary to the Admiralty. For years he was muzzled by minor office, and only those who had the fortune to share his midnight vigils in the Parliamentary Home Guard, or who promenaded the Lobbies with him when he was "on the door" as a Government Whip, knew of his powers of witty oratory.

So he burst on most of the House as a new "star," and delivered as good a speech as any made for months, showing a mastery of his subject (education, R.N., for the use of) that dazzled—and silenced—the critics, and brought from that connoisseur of all things Parliamentary, Lord WINTERTON, a glowing tribute of praise. All of which (plus the roar of approving cheers) made "JIM" THOMAS blush like an embarrassed schoolboy. It was, incidentally, by way of being his maiden speech as a Minister.

After that the debate rather tailed off, and a House consisting of Lord WINTERTON, Mr. TOM DRIBBERG, Mr. WILLIAM GALLACHER, Mr. T. E. HARVEY, Captain BEECHMAN, Mr. ERNEST THURLE and Mr. G. MATHERS (that is a complete nominal roll) listened to a speech by Lord HINCHINGBROOKE asking for an extra hour a day of the B.B.C.'s General Forces Programme. He did not say why.

Lord WINTERTON (himself no mean performer at the microphone) complained that there was still an "excess" of female crooners, whose efforts reminded him of the caterwauling of an inebriated cockatoo. Nor, said he, could he bring himself to believe that so much bewailing of "lost babies" could be the stuff to give the troops.

Lord WINTERTON made it all so vivid that one almost expected the rest of the House softly and nostalgically to chant the "Boo-boo-boo" of a Bing Crosby refrain. But Mr. THURLE, speaking for the Ministry of Information, denied paternity of the programmes, and expressed the view



"These lemons, Madam—do I steam, fry, or boil them?"

that the morale of the British Army was proof against mention of lost babies or even the excess efforts of the crooners.

Mr. LESLIE BOYCE, Conservative Member for Gloucester, was back on duty after a long illness, looking thin but determined—he was asking questions a few minutes after his arrival—and a notable absentee through illness was Brigadier HARVIE WATT, the Prime Minister's Parliamentary Private Secretary.

Mr. CHURCHILL sorely missed his lieutenant. He arrived flustered, late for questions, had to apologize, seemed a bit lost in the maze of papers he carried, and eventually wandered disconsolately out. It was about the best tribute any absent Member could have wished.

Wednesday, March 8th.—Mr. HENRY WILLINK, the Minister of Health, is a tactful and skilful (if somewhat inexperienced) denizen of the Front Bench, and he certainly spoke up when the time came for him to make an announcement about the Government's post-war housing policy.

He had to, poor fellow, for most

of the Opposition Members and not a few of the Government's normal supporters seemed to be engaged in a concentrated effort to shout him down. It appeared that Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, Leader of the House, had thoughtfully arranged that the statement should be made then for the general convenience of the House.

But the House, in one of those moods when it not only looks every gift-horse in the mouth but is apt to lug out the tell-tale molars, would have none of this. Some forty-five minutes passed in points of order, protests, and a general moaning at the Bar ere Mr. Speaker was able to call on Mr. WILLINK to make a very small but important statement to the effect that the Government hoped to get 100,000 houses built in the first year after the European war ends, and another 200,000 in the second year.

Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN got passionate about it (as is his wont) and mentioned that it meant reducing Parliament to the status of a rubber stamp. Mr. SHINWELL followed (as the law reports used to say) on the same side. Mr.

EDEN, for the defence, mildly said he had expected more gratitude, and that he had already arranged for a day's debate on the statement. Seemingly the dissentients saw something sinister in the fact that the statement was made after Questions, and not by means of a White Paper.

Mr. THOMAS JOHNSTON, the Scottish Secretary, proceeded to open a debate on nutrition and what a Member once called "cognac subjects."

Attendance in the House could have done with a little nutrition. The House was, in fact, decidedly "thin."

Thursday, March 9th.—The Prime Minister announced (in anything but Basic English) that the Government is to adopt Basic English as an auxiliary to ordinary English in certain cases. The House was comparatively unmoved.

It is a little difficult to recall the far-off days when there was not an Education Bill to be dealt with. It had another day in Committee to-day, and (as the formal phrase has it) the Chairman "reported progress." But of course he asked leave to sit again.



"Not my idea of a Government Office, but safer than Berlin!"

Lady Addle's Domestic Front

Bengers, Herts, 1944

MY DEAR, DEAR READERS,
—Although these notes are to be devoted mainly to cookery I cannot resist telling you some of the things I contrived for gifts last Christmas, as they may be useful to you through the year for birthdays, or even weddings.

All of us adore Christmas, but perhaps we Coots regarded it with a very special feeling, and I never remember a Christmastide at home when we did not decorate the house with holly, hang up our stockings, and

give each other presents. Yet there was no ostentation about these last, my father's annual present to us children being simple in the extreme, almost austere: just one large beautifully cut diamond, which was then sent to our family jeweller to be added to the parure which was only completed on our fifteenth birthday. Even so, my mother feared we might become over-confident and perhaps blasé with the gift. "Never forget, children," she would say, "that there are many little girls whose mothers and fathers can only afford to give them sapphires," and in this way she

maintained in our childish minds a fine sense of proportion.

But to return—or rather to jump forward—to last Christmas. How difficult it was, what with coupons and high prices and the shortage of everything! There were books of course, though many of these, my own poor work included, gave their lives for their country (2,764 out of the original edition of 3,000 having been blitzed in the publisher's bindery), so as I did not know anything I was sure my friends would like I had to think again.

Here goes, then, with a few suggestions for improvised gifts.

Flowers. This is a problem for all—what to put on the dinner-table, what to put in the drawing-room. We all love flowers, though I think I have never seen anyone with such a passionate love of orchids as had my sister Mipsie (who, after the sad failure of her fourth marriage, has gone back to her first name of Duchess of Brisket). She would come in any day, while in the heyday of her beauty, with great armfuls of the lovely blossoms—yet she always seemed to want more. "You don't understand, Blanche. It isn't the flowers. It's what they represent," she would say. Indeed, ardent flower-lover though I have always been, I have never reached quite that point of mysticism.

But even in war-time flower decoration can be managed with a little ingenuity, as the following will show:

Potato-Peel Poppies.—This, I fear, robs the pigs somewhat, but I am sure the generous fellows would not grudge the peelings of six large potatoes, which is all you need for a vase of six splendid poppies to set your friend's room ablaze. Just peel your spud (rather a vulgar word this, but I am a country-bred lass, so must be forgiven it) in petals, not rings, paint them in gay scarlet enamel, and—when they are quite dry—wire them on to strong twigs for stems. A black button from your good man's old waistcoat will serve as a centre.

Soup-Tin and Tennis-Ball Water Lilies.—Yes, you will never believe it, but it is just as easy to guide your tin-opener in the shape of a flat water-lily leaf, which can either be painted, or left—a faery gleam of silver, floating in your rose bowl! For the flowers, cut old tennis-balls in half and shape them in cunning petals with a pair of sharp scissors, colour them yellow, white, pink, red—let yourself go!—and your friends will be struck speechless when they see the result.

Patriotic Match-boxes.—What could be more dull and inartistic than a match-box lying about the house?

But paint and stick a Union Jack on each side, cut out any figure of a soldier, sailor or airman from an illustrated paper, and stick him on cardboard, with a cardboard flap to stand him upright like a photograph frame; put a hat-pin through the match-box end and then through the man's arm so as to appear as if he were waving aloft the flag of his country, and you transform a commonplace article into an inspiration.

And while on the subject of match-boxes, delightful ash-trays can be made from squat potted-meat glasses, by coating the outside with glue and sticking on bacon rinds in graceful flowing designs. Then hey presto!—roll the whole thing in sand quickly. The result has a rich embossed look, if a somewhat unpleasant odour. And don't forget to eat the potted meat first!

I could go on for ever, giving you all hints for cheering your loved ones and beautifying their homes. Face-flannels made into bunnies, with press-studs for eyes and a safety-pin mouth; egg cosies fashioned from old socks, embroidered in raffia; smart hats made from old felt slippers, and cosy slippers constructed by cutting up and piecing together old felt hats.

Perhaps I am unusual, but I do like to make a point of giving a present which will please the recipient. That is why I was so touched when my friends and family thanked me so warmly. My evacuees (I accompanied each gift with a little cheque) literally beamed with pleasure. As for my dear Mipsie, she wrote:

DARLING BLANCHE,—I love my little match-box stand with the pearl-headed hat-pin. Surely that was the real pearl pin which Uncle Ally gave you? Thank you, darling, for making it so beautifully, you clever thing.

Your ever loving,

MIPSY.

P.S.—Don't forget to let me know about the pin.

Mipsie was specially fond of Uncle Ally,* and would treasure even a hat-pin (it was a real pearl, by the way) for his sake. Ah, but we had large hearts in the good old days.

M. D.

Winter Orchid 1944

NIGHT, that dark beauty, not content to wear

The stars *en parure*, sets a burning flare,

A green and ghastly flower in her hair.

* Allick, sixth Duke of Droghda, my mother's brother.

Planning in the Office

THE way some people go on you'd think nobody had ever planned anything but the Nazis. As if an office just ran itself without your constantly stopping to look ahead and remember all the things you're behind-hand with. Not to mention reminding Mr. Head of all the things he didn't do yesterday that you've been carrying forward on his diary for the last week, and seeing what the office boy's doing and why he hasn't finished it yet, and ringing through to Mrs. Head to send a spare piece along for next time Mr. Head goes to the Midlands and we get a telegram, ARRIVED SAFELY SEND SOAP. Only last time it was a towel.

Talk about a Five Year Plan! The next five minutes is about as much as I can manage if we're to get any tea this afternoon I often tell Willie, who can't look ahead far enough to put the kettle on but puts me off by having to run out to the post office because he's run out of stamps. Then just when I'm getting down to things again the telephone rings or the door opens, and even if it's only the gas girl wanting a chair to read the meter by it's all up with your plans and you're sunk. Because it isn't the work that takes the time in an office, it's the interruptions, and whoever said one thing at a time and that done well hadn't ever worked for a man who'd mislay his head if it was loose. Talk about the office wife! It's a whole harem of them Mr. Head needs to keep him up to scratch.

Or else he goes and overdoes it like his fuel saving the morning he nearly let his fire out this week and had to take the *Financial Times* to it and then the real *Times*, and in the end both of them went up the chimney and nearly set the place on fire, and such a smell and smuts! Doris and I wondered if he could be had up for wasting paper, and it did seem a shame all that lovely blaze going up the chimney and Doris's girl-friend who's in the Civil Service having to economize by leaving her gas fire on when she goes in the kitchen because she's so short of matches with not smoking.

Then there's all the office itself to move round after sitting on top of the fire all the winter, and now we have to plan how we can all get into the window, and I always like myself to arrange my desk so that nobody can see what I've got in my typewriter, just in case. Though I will say ours isn't one of those suspicious glass-case offices like some I've been in where you

might as well sit in the Aquarium at the Zoo and be done with it.

I'll own up I shall be glad myself when we can get back to before the war and be rid of all this planning and austerity and complacency and coupons and points and pig-food, for it does take some scheming to get all the things you've got to get into your day. All the same I never think myself you need get up much earlier in the morning than you did before the war, because all you do is just stand in a queue the time you used to sit in a traffic block, and it comes to much the same thing though chillier. But our refugee says it's chronicle the way he never has any time for his breakfast and if only it would get him down sooner he'd willingly pay two or three quids for an alarming clock.

If it comes to that, even Willie has to do a bit of planning nowadays, the way the Ministry's always got a fresh address. He's got it all worked out which end of a Tube train to get in at every station so that he's out and up the moving staircase before it gets so jammed up with Americans you can only stand still. The other day I found a paper in the postage book labelled "Ch. X" and thought was our Willie writing a book, but it wasn't Chapter Ten but only a plan of Charing Cross Underground he was making out, and as far as I can make out, the more changes he has the quicker he gets there, saving seconds all the time like that Dynamic Executive Desk the efficiency experts sold our American director, though you'd wonder such a slowcoach managed to get to know so much about trains.

So I'll say we do our share of planning in this office. Doris and I are always working out how old we shall be when the war's over and what kind of houses and families we want. But planning is all very well if you could stop where you are and make a fresh start, but you can't scrap everything in war-time and have all new envelopes and long pencils and tea-cups to match. Besides, the minute the blitz starts again, planning flies straight out of your head and you eat up all your butter and sweets coupons just in case and what's the good of taking your light coat to be cleaned to be bombed, and everything has to be packed away in the safe at night and the typewriters taken downstairs till you spend half the next morning unplanning.

Anyway, the things you plan for

never happen, and if they do they turn out different—like that lull the moment the Germans announced their non-stop blitz on London had started. Now Doris and I have planned for donkey's years we'd spend a night in the Tube some day just to see what it's like sheltering for Doris to tell her grandchildren about. So the other week-end when her father and mother went to her married sister's I went to stay with her and we'd got it all worked out for if there was an alarm. Of course we never thought there would be, seeing we were ready for it, but there was, and I woke Doris up, though it took some doing, and off we pelted, and a good thing the guns hadn't started yet.

And then when we got to the station it was all locked up and only a policeman there, and he told us we'd better get back to bed quick before we caught cold, because we'd slept through a nice peaceful raid and what woke us up was the All Clear.

That Concluded the Proceedings.

I STAYED last week-end with Jean Salvardine, the famous pianist. I've known him for years and his real name is Timothy George Salmon, but he long ago realized that, as a name, Tim Salmon was perhaps a handicap to a serious musical career. At school we always called him "Sardine."

During the week-end I attended a directors' meeting. Admittedly it is unusual to have directors' meetings on Sunday morning in country cottages, but the fact is that Tim has for some while been a private company—"Jean Salvardine, Ltd." It is not of course one of those tax-dodging one-man companies registered abroad, but a perfectly legitimate way of carrying on his profession of piano-playing. He has merely put himself on the same business footing as any other trading company. Tim himself of course is managing director and is officially employed on a salary-cum-expenses basis to earn money for the company. His wife is the only other director: in fact they *are* the company.

Tim was talking about it on Sunday when he suddenly said to his wife "I say, why shouldn't we have a directors' meeting? We've never had a proper one." She said "But what about Jack?" Jack is the family solicitor and official secretary to the company. Tim said "Jack's idea of

just writing up the minutes of a meeting we've never properly had and sending them to us to sign is all very well, but it's giving him ideas above his station. Dammit, he's only a servant of the company. Come on! Let's show him!"

Since I know shorthand I was deputed to take down the proceedings verbatim, and here they are:

MINUTES OF A DIRECTORS' MEETING
HELD IN THE DINING-ROOM OF HEATH-
SIDE, SURREY, AT NOON ON SUNDAY,
MARCH 12th 1944

Present :

Mr. Timothy Salmon (in the Chair)
Mrs. Timothy Salmon.

In Attendance :

Official Shorthand Writer.

The managing director, after formally expressing regret at the absence of the secretary, reported that the Company had had a pretty good year on the whole. He'd done several big concerts and had made a pretty good—he should say, had made on behalf of the Company a pretty good income. Conditions in the piano-playing world had been most favourable for the Jean Salvardine products—was he going too fast for the shorthand writer? The shorthand writer replied No, it was O.K., old boy.

Resuming, the managing director said he would have had great pleasure in presenting the balance sheet and the profit-and-loss account to the meeting, except that he hadn't got them. He did not understand the things and left them to the secretary and the auditor, who hitherto had always drafted them out in the former's Strand office and then met him later at the "Cheshire Cheese" to explain what it all meant, subsequently sending copies along for signature.

A director asked why the "Cheshire Cheese," and the managing director replied, in a somewhat defensive manner, because it was handy. A director asked why should not all three meet in the secretary's office. The managing director said there were technical reasons for that into which he would not go at the moment, and hurriedly continued his report.

As far as he could estimate, without the exact figures in front of him, the balance of income over expenditure was pretty good, even after allowing for the managing director's usual salary and his travelling and other expenses.

A director asked what were the other expenses and what proportion of them was directly connected with meetings at the "Cheshire Cheese."

The managing director said the

secretary and/or auditor would no doubt be able to answer that query, meanwhile the meeting had to consider the question of the distribution of the Company's profits. His own proposal was that the Company should distribute the whole of the profits as a bonus to the managing director in recognition of the excellent work he . . .

A director asked what about the other directors, didn't they get anything? She thought they jolly well should, seeing she had to run the house, look after the managing director, see that he got to the concert halls in time and . . .

The managing director said Oh, very well, he would propose that the directors received a fee of £100 for the year, and it would darn well come off her dress-allowance. After all, she'd swiped half his coupons that year already.

A director said the managing director seemed to have forgotten all about the housekeeping.

The managing director said that was amply provided for.

A director said that was what *he* thought was it, well, let her tell him . . .

The shorthand writer here tactfully but unofficially drew the managing director's attention to the business in hand, and the managing director requested the shorthand writer to mind his own business, and anyway not call him "Sardine." He then formally moved that the Company's profits for the year, less £100 to be distributed as directors' fees, be paid to the managing director as a bonus for his unremitting exertions on behalf of the Company and his unswerving loyalty. A director said Come off it. Amidst some disorder the resolution was put to the vote, the result being: For—1; Against—1. The managing director thereupon gave his casting vote in favour of the resolution, which was thus carried.

A director then said rather huffily so that was the way things were worked, was it? If she wasn't to have a proper say they could go on swilling at the "Cheshire Cheese" in future for all she cared, and now she must go and look at the joint in the oven, she had other things to do besides talk. If the managing director wanted cocktails the gin was in the cupboard, he could mix her one too while he was about it, and not to go and drink it himself either with any of his casting vote funny excuses.

All the Board, with the exception of the managing director, who was busy getting out glasses, then left the room, and that concluded the proceedings. A. A.



"It's a great nuisance having to have all this five inches of bath-water."

Last Will and Testament

I HENRY JAMES WATERTON, schoolmaster, revoke all wills heretofore made by me at any time (as is, I believe, the custom) and declare this to be my last Will and Testament. That is, unless I make another. This would then be the superseded penultimate.

After payment of (a) my just Debts, (b) my Funeral Expenses (no inconsiderable item with the cost of living so high), I will and bequeath to:

(i) my elder daughter, Phoebe Millie Roundup (sometime Phoebe Millie Waterton), whose marriage to an attendance officer made her no more punctual than before, the sum of five hundred pounds, to be the first instalment on a clock.

(ii) my younger daughter, Dulce Decorum Waterton, promising philologist, passable mathematician and no mean cook, three hundred pounds (not avoirdupois, verb. sap.), Newton's *Principia*, the *Herbiary*, Skeat, Bosworth-Toller, Larousse, Fowler and that desirable freehold residence "Haute Ecole," in which she was trained and where she still lives.

(iii) my three sons, Orlando, Kipling and Comus, whom I will call for convenience A, B, and C, the residue of my estate and effects as follows:

(1) A is to receive one-eleventh less than B and C put together.

(2) B is to receive twice as much as C and as much less than A as A received less than B and C combined.

(3) C to receive the remainder and my exhortation to diligence and application.

(Executors, N.B.: Where there are three unknowns, three equations are required to find them.)

Signed and acknowledged by the said Henry James Waterton, the same (bad!) having been previously read over to him as and for his last Will, in the presence of us, present at the same time, who, in his presence, at his request, and in the presence of each other, have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses.

Codicil: The tautology in the foregoing paragraph was forced on me by legal procedure.

HENRY JAMES WATERTON.



"I see one to let in Vale Road in about six months' time—but it has no bathroom, I'm afraid."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Mr. Harold Laski's Faith

MR. HAROLD LASKI seems unable to say anything briefly and without circumlocution. For example—"With the assumption of the Premiership by Mr. Churchill, there was something akin to a spiritual renaissance in Britain"; or, in reference to a lack of idealism in millionaires, "The pursuit of perfection is omitted from their conception of life." It is difficult therefore for the reader of *Faith, Reason and Civilization* (GOLLANCZ, 6/-) to find out what exactly Mr. LASKI's beliefs are. Perhaps the following sentence provides the best clue—"No one can read the Old Testament without the sense that it comes from a people to whom the gospel of hard work was vital; just as, in reading the New Testament, it is hard to discover in the central figure of its narrative any deep concern with a work-a-day world." From this one may infer that Mr. LASKI is not drawn to the ideas contained in the gospels, so far as they imply a belief in man as a being whose destiny extends beyond this life. On the other hand, he is much impressed by the use the Catholic Church made of these ideas. "The Christian victory," as he calls it, consisted in the adroitness with which the Church reconciled the masses to their inescapable poverty by promising them a heaven which the rich would enter, if at all, only with extreme difficulty. Since the Renaissance, however, the growth of new and immense economic opportunities has opened up a prospect of riches for everyone. "As scientific progress subdues nature to the purposes of man, the idea of the heavenly city of early Christianity gives way to the dream in which the reward of man's effort is not salvation in the life to come but happiness upon this

earth itself." This is the faith of the future, and Russia is the country that will deliver it to the world, if one may condense into an intelligible statement innumerable sentences of this kind—"The basic idea of the Russian Revolution satisfies the conditions any new system of values must satisfy if it is to fill the void left by the wholesale decay of the old." Elsewhere, however, Mr. LASKI writes that he does not "for one moment deny the validity of revelation for those rare and special persons who find in an experience private to themselves a reality which transcends the reality in which ordinary men and women share." But, he adds, such experiences cannot survive when tested by the canons of scientific evidence, and are therefore not entitled to assume the form of an ecclesiastical organization. Mr. LASKI explains neither how a revelation of transcendental reality can be scientifically tested, nor how a revelation can be valid unless it reveals something. Apparently he regards organization as the end of man, and anything that has ceased to serve this end as an unsuitable subject for coherent reflection.

H. K.

Rogue's Gallery

There is something to be said, after all, for the historical novel whose hero is only remarkable for the good company he keeps. No one, for instance, troubles to knock the sawdust out of *Quentin Durward*. He has served his turn in introducing you to Louis XI. Mr. NEIL BELL, going one better, has arranged so that his hero—in himself a mere epitome of flash Georgian vagabondage—encounters, and allows the reader to re-encounter, a whole galaxy of Regency greatness. *Ben Wayne*, alias *Holderness*, alias the *Count d'Artois*, is thus—and quite legitimately—the cup of hot water added to an already soluble extract of contemporary memoirs; and all goes well, according to formula, until the rather ghostly *Ben* is allowed to monopolize attention himself. He is at Harrow and Genoa and Missolonghi with Byron; introduces the waltz to the ravished "Prinny"; is well ahead—the financiers got in first—with inside news of Waterloo; and accompanies Napoleon, as interpreter, to St. Helena. His private life, of a wholly discreditable character, is not really integrated with these public feats; and if *Child of My Sorrow* (COLLINS, 10/6) has not, as a whole, the interest of its parts, that is perhaps the reason.

H. P. E.

Muse of the Thistle

To produce "a class of poetry . . . well adapted to interest mankind permanently" was the sound aim of "Lyrical Ballads." At once newfangled and iconoclastic, the work of Wordsworth and Coleridge needed an explanatory manifesto and got it. The first number of *Poetry—Scotland* (MACLELLAN, 4/6) boasts three manifestos, and would do, as the writers of two of them acutely observe, with more. Mr. MAURICE LINDSAY, Mr. Compton Mackenzie and Mr. Macdiarmid contribute an Editorial Letter, an Introduction and an essay on "Poetry in Scotland To-day," respectively; but their seventeen Scots poets have so little ground in common that one aesthetic exposition per man would have been more helpful. Mr. LINDSAY wisely urges that poetry should be at once more regional and more international; and indeed it is impossible to feel that any outstanding group of "makers" will emerge anywhere until individual poets are more sturdily rooted and more generously branched. Mr. Macdiarmid stresses the claims of mother earth and of folk-song—but his own verse owes little to either; Mr. Sydney Smith's "Largo" derives its signal beauty from both; while Mr. Douglas Young—the

pick of the bunch—makes a patriotic use of the most sumptuous and scholarly of his country's vernaculars, the Lallans, or "Braid Scots," of the renaissance. H. F. E.

Klaus Mann

The otherwise balanced, though cordial, appreciation of *The Turning Point* (GOLLANCZ, 12/6) which appears on its jacket becomes unduly charitable when it states that the author, after a few wild years, is now a "modest, responsible and conscientious artist." This autobiography of KLAUS MANN, the son of the famous German novelist Thomas Mann, is in no respect a work of art. It is extremely diffuse, apparently rather than actually candid, devoid of modesty, false or genuine, and altogether lacking in detachment. On the other hand, it is unusually interesting, both as a revelation of character and as a reflection of certain aspects of our age. The book opens with a picturesque account of the author's grandparents; on the paternal side a senator of Lübeck married to a Brazilian beauty, on the maternal a wealthy grandfather with a Jewish background married to "the most glamorous and gracious of all the hostesses in the Bavarian capital." We need not linger over KLAUS MANN's childhood beyond noting that he describes himself as "a chubby little Narcissus." Of his intellectual development he records that "neither the strongest gravity of Friedrich Hebbel nor the mighty dimensions of Goethe's versatile amplitude could frighten me away"; but the teacher who appears to have influenced him most profoundly was André Gide. From him he learnt to be faithful to his "innermost design," and to become himself "in a purer, more conscious and uncompromising way." In his late teens he began to travel—London, Paris, Tunisia and Italy. Paris he was particularly drawn to, specifying among its attractions "the charmingly hoarse voices of the prostitutes and the duchesses, and the treacherous innocence of the pimps and the poets." When the Nazis came to power, they included KLAUS, who by this time had a reputation of his own, in their general disapproval of the Mann family. "I might," he says, "have been a more efficient fighter if I had bothered to scrutinize the depth of the German psychosis." But he preferred to dissociate himself from "the whole sordid mess," left Germany early in 1933, and after a stay of two or three years in Amsterdam, where he edited a monthly which included Gide, Croce, and Aldous Huxley among its contributors, went to the United States. His stay there, which still continues, appears to be quite pleasurable, though not without its difficulties, chiefly financial, and its discouragements, among which may be reckoned an interview with H. G. Wells, who dwelt on the hideous character of the German people, and added that the refugees were about as bad as the Nazis. H. K.

Sea Lawyer

"Fighting at night, generally against vastly superior and more powerfully armed vessels, ourselves extremely vulnerable, the lightning thrust was our chance. Catch the enemy on his heels, go for him bald-headed, hit him hard and quickly, then get out." So Lieut.-Commander ROBERT HICHENS, D.S.O., D.S.C., R.N.V.R., sums up the art of fighting E-boats and others in gun-boats, and as he was in a hundred and forty-eight operations and fourteen actions he writes from great experience in a book—*We Fought Them in Gunboats* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 9/6)—which death in action stopped him from revising. But we doubt if any revision could have added to the zest and spirit of this record of our little ships. The book is full of exciting

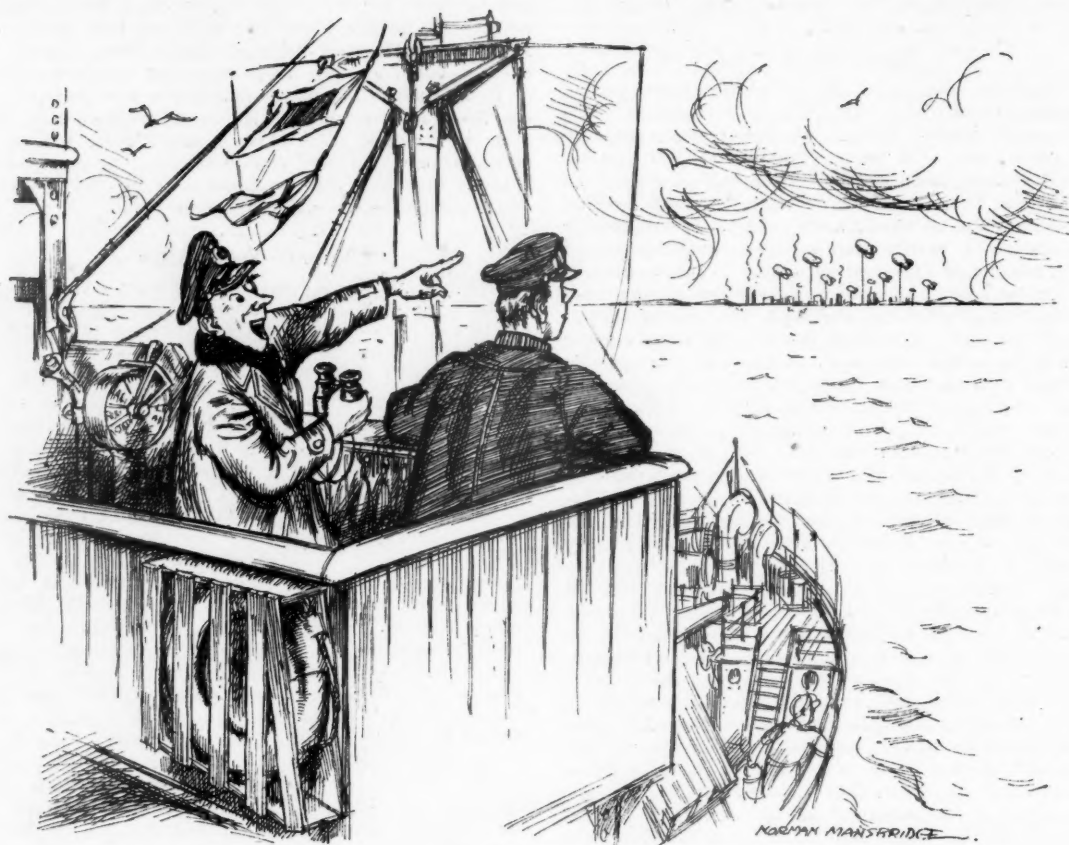
adventures, biting humour, good swift thinking and lively love of the sea. The author, a lawyer by profession, took command of a twelve-foot sailing-boat at the age of seven. He gathered his love of speed from racing cars. In a foreword, Rear-Admiral Hugh Hext Rogers says that he could size up a situation and calculate the odds as well as any other officer of his own age trained up to the Navy from boyhood. He would need all that when, with two boats only (three make a unit, but on this occasion one had had engine trouble), he engaged four E-boats and was able to hoist a Nazi flag under the White Ensign before making harbour. B. E. B.

Twenty Years After

Venezuelan Gilt is the title Mr. LEONARD CARO has given to his book of South American reminiscences, published by HURST AND BLACKETT at 16/—and the publishers justly hint that the second word might very well have been spelt differently. For his young traveller—*Ernest Mitchell* is the name he assumes—went to Venezuela some twenty years ago, having learned Spanish by the simple expedient of working five hours a day at it for a whole year and thereby obtaining a post as cashier in the mines. And in 1920 the country was not exactly a pleasant place to live in, for it was still under the blood-stained rule of Juan Vicente Gómez, whose life has been written since by Mr. Thomas Rourke—*The Tyrant of the Andes* is its very appropriate name. Mr. CARO has compressed into a single chapter most of the horrors with which Mr. Rourke's history is filled. In his rather flamboyant style he strives hard to awaken our "atrophied consciences," but he realizes that it is difficult in these days to arouse vehement opinion. And Venezuela is a long way off, and these things happened a long time ago. Still, from the end of 1908 to his death in 1935 Gómez appears to have beaten the record of most dictators for barbarous cruelty, largely assisted, the author explains, by foreign nations whose representatives at Carácas were carefully flattered and primed by the dictator himself. In spite of all this Mr. CARO has contrived to give us an amusing and lifelike picture of young *Mitchell's* journey out, his arrival at Puerto Cabello, the singular characters he met on board and, later on, at the mines where he was employed. He possesses a high-spirited style, which he keeps going with great determination, and his friends (and enemies) are etched with lively vigour. But as for Venezuela itself, it seems, twenty years ago, to have had no sanitation and less morals. L. W.



"Now look at the Curtiss Mobawk IV."



"Civilization at last, Mr. Harrington—do you see the balloon barrage ahead?"

Toller Reports

To O.C. B Sqn.

I SUBMIT my report herewith as required on the afternoon's sport in which I took part yesterday and in which trouble apparently occurred as detailed in your note. The pheasant concerned is returned by D.R. herewith as this was still intact in the process of being hung to celebrate the birthday of the Detachment Commander. I regret, however, that it is not possible to return the two rabbits and the hedgehog, which have been skinned for consumption in the Detachment Officers' Mess with the idea of saving rations, and which the D.R. is not willing to receive in the mail-bag in their present condition, despite the replacing of skins on the rabbits by means of tape, adhesive, in

an effort to carry out this order. Responsibility for events occurring during the afternoon concerned is accepted entirely by myself as Detachment Commander, as is also responsibility for two other matters referred to in two other notes received since I took over command last Friday and which I hope to deal with immediately as requested in two other reports. But I would point out that time available for composition of reports is limited if training is to be properly supervised and proper courtesy extended to neighbouring residents in the evening—the Detachment officers having, for instance, been invited to dinner tomorrow by the owner of a local estate, from which obligation it is not possible to withdraw, as it is strengthened by

the fact that the daughter of the house is in the same Waaf unit as the sister of 2/Lt Stookley, who, I am glad to report, is proving an excellent officer and a valuable addition to the Troop: in addition it is hoped to obtain permission from this host by judicious handling in the port stage by the Detachment Commander for troops of the Detachment to be allowed occasional use of a spare billiards-room, where ping-pong is also available, as well as other amenities, such as baths for the officers, which are not possible in the present billets. It is in fact generally planned to behave with the utmost courtesy and consideration towards civilian residents in the area, who are perhaps the only civilians in the country remaining

unspoiled by contact with previous troops, and in this connection I am the more concerned with allegations against the Detachment in respect of the shoot referred to above, no knowledge of these complaints existing here apart from the note received from Sqn, and it should be considered that these complaints by telephone to your office may not be entirely trustworthy, the true facts of the affair being as follows.

On the question of permission, no permission was actually obtained to shoot game, for the reason that game was not intended to be shot, the idea being merely that the three subalterns under my command and myself should each take a cove and that we should scare pigeons from one cove to another, dispatching them as they flew in, this scheme being the invention of 2/Lt Stookley, who is country-bred and was in the habit of doing this successfully in shooting circles before the war. With regard to the actions of the other officers I am therefore unable to report, since I was stationed alone in the cove allotted to my charge and heard only various shots in the distance, but my own movements in detail are as follows and are presumably what are required, as the hedgehog fell to my gun in addition to the pheasant, no serious complaint surely being possible on the subject of the rabbits, which are vermin and a pest to farmers. The original intention of shooting pigeons was finally abandoned by me after two hours' sport, since these birds fly at an excess speed and have in addition the habit of altering course as though by telepathy at the moment of pressing the trigger, several birds being lost for this reason while several others had the strength to continue flying when full of pellets, it thus not seeming worth while to proceed, since I had only been given a limited supply of cartridges. I consequently evolved the alternative plan of concealing myself completely in a bush and allowing the birds to settle in trees before stalking them, this appearing not entirely sporting but permissible in consideration of the damage done by pigeons to the farming effort of the country. Even this plan, however, had eventually to be abandoned as these pigeons appeared to be possessed of a sixth sense operating within a minimum distance of one hundred yards, and consequently it was impossible to get within range, the cold-blooded slaughter of birds sitting on boughs further weighing against a continuance of this particular project. I thus came to indulge in general rough shooting, which involved a stealthy

patrol of woodland rides, eventually yielding the hedgehog which should have been in hibernation according to 2/Lt Stookley but which was put up, not from a hedge, but from a ditch, crossing the ride at a fast pace until stopped in its tracks by myself with both barrels, I not being entirely aware of its identity at the time nor of the peculiar value of this animal for eating.

I was certainly not aware, nor is the fact confirmed by 2/Lt Stookley, that hedgehogs are protected in the same way as deer, nor that there is a season for shooting them, and perhaps the complaint in this connection could be checked with special reference to its validity. The only grounds for such a complaint might be that the hedgehog was a pet of some kind, and this appeared unlikely as it seemed quite free to wander in the wood, and but for my marksmanship would have disappeared down another deep ditch. Some time was spent in contemplation of the dead hedgehog, the event taking place in a particularly eerie part of the wood, and it also proved troublesome to arrange the creature in the signal satchel which I was using for a game-bag, since the quills were apt to poke out of the top and prick me in the back, thus disturbing concentration on other game, with the result that twilight had fallen before the chase had properly been resumed; it then not being understood that twilight shooting is not considered in good taste although this was later pointed out by 2/Lt Stookley in relation to the death of the pheasant, which was apparently going to sleep. Had I been aware of this I would not have shot the bird, which on the contrary I imagined was remaining still in an effort to avoid notice and thus was a legitimate target for the sportsman, as I further stalked the pheasant for approximately thirty

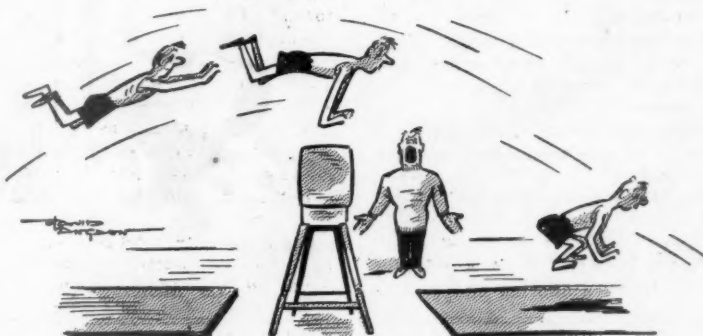
minutes, finally manœuvring it against the moon.

The complaint presumably originates from the man whom I met shortly after this episode and who inquired if I had had any luck, I unsuspectingly showing him the pheasant and the hedgehog and actually describing how I had shot the pheasant, imagining this technique to be my own invention and of possible use to fellow sportsmen, it seeming easier than attempting to shoot them in the air. The novelty of my methods appeared to strike this man with wonder and we parted with what I imagined considerable awe on his side, and it is still possible that the complaints are merely an effort to contact myself and elucidate these tactics further, in which case I shall be glad to come forward, although as mentioned above the methods are not orthodox. In this case I agree permission should correctly have been obtained to shoot game in the area concerned, but the point arises that I was not at the time at all certain what manner of bird was sitting in the tree and was in fact under the impression that it was a large pigeon with a special sort of tail; so that, at most, the infringement was made without intent, and I tender my apology herewith which I trust will be accepted by the owner of the estate concerned, who must himself be a sporting man.

With regard to the further reports required, these after all will be completed in time for to-morrow's late D.R., as a telephone-call in the last few minutes from the friend of 2/Lt Stookley's sister has revealed the coincidence that our host for to-morrow is in fact the estate owner referred to above, and from his reported frame of mind I am advised to have a headache.

(Signed) J. TOLLER, Lt.

Home Forces.



"Cor bless me 'eart and soul—you're like a lot of ruddy snails!"

This Talking at Breakfast

"BUT who actually decides these things—where we shall invade, and who'll do it, and so on? I mean who gives the final ruling?"

"What you don't seem to understand is that it's not the British Fifth Army. It's the American."

"I thought it was mixed."

"It is. But the Eighth is all ours."

"I don't know why they make so much fuss about it being the Eighth, if there isn't any other."

"What on earth do you mean?"

"Where are Armies One to Seven?"

"Well, the First Army made the landing in North Africa."

"But where is it now?"

"Sitting there, guarding the coast, I suppose."

"Aren't the French doing that?"

"What, all the way down to Alexandria, including Tripoli and Tobruk?"

"I thought that was Amgot's job."

"Amgot is the Allied Military Government of Occupied Territories. Egypt isn't occupied. It's ours."

"I understood Amgot meant Ancient Military Gentlemen On Tour. Is there a Second Army?"

"I don't know."

"I bet the Germans know. And where it is."

"The only other one I've heard of is the Ninth, which has been in Syria all the time, under Maitland Wilson."

"And now they've moved Maitland Wilson to take Eisenhower's place. And left Alexander in the mud."

"Oh, they know what they're doing all right. They're not so silly."

"Which Army has Monty got?"

"Ours."

"I know, but why don't they call it 2-oblique-3 Army, or something. It's so silly to call one the Eighth, and nothing else anything. Which Army is in Burma?"

"The Japanese."

"No, you know who I mean. That fellow who started the Commandos. Naval bloke. Married a cousin to the King, didn't he?"

"I thought he was the cousin."

"Well, he's in command of that Army, anyhow."

"You don't mean Wavell?"

"No, no."

"Casey."

"That's Bengal. Wait a minute, though. There's another chap. The

fellow who stopped the rot at Alamein before Montgomery arrived. Funny name, Welsh or something."

"I know who you mean, but I don't know how to pronounce it."

"Well, what Army is his? The Third, or what?"

"I've no idea, old boy."

"Do you know which Army is at Malta, then, under Gort?"

"Gort is at Gib."

"But who does he come under?"

"You mean who is his manager?"

"I want to know who settles all these things."

"Churchill."

"Nonsense. In that case, he would be manager of the Post Office as well. And the Mines. You might as well say the King."

"If you mean just the Army, I suppose it's Grigg."

"Grigg is a politician who answers questions in the House. He isn't a soldier at all."

"The Chief of the Imperial General Staff, then."

"He looks after one thing only. Ops. He's head of the Brass Hats."

"They all wear brass hats. A. Q. and G. And if you really want to know, they all sit on the Army Council wearing them."

"As a matter of fact I've just thought where the other armies may be. In this country!"



"Dear Mother . . ."

"Those are Americans, man."

"There are some others."

"Well, you never hear anyone over here say he is in the Fourth or Seventh Army. He says he is in Western or Scottish Command."

"Is Churchill on the Army Council?"

"No, he is on the War Cabinet. The Army Council is a committee, my dear fellow, which issues 4,000 instructions every year, which are printed and circulated and, when indexed, are found to cancel each other out."

"But these changes in armies were settled by Roosevelt and Churchill. The Army Council were never mentioned."

"Of course it's quite possible we haven't got any other armies. In which case the whole idea of calling the one we have got the Eighth is a colossal bluff. It might not be a bad idea, at that."

"I wonder they don't suddenly announce that some phantom army called the Eleventh is just moving up into position between the Fifth and the Eighth, on bicycles. That would fox them."

"They did move one on to the coast, in boats."

"They didn't give it a number."

"Look here, you said all you wanted to know was who the manager of the whole thing is."

"Well, yes, I want to ask him whether, when the Second Front really starts, they are going to stop leave. If so I shall go now, and if not I would rather wait till the rain stops."

"Then write to the Army Council."

"I don't see how they would know."

"Well, there is your own acting assistant adjutant. Ask him."

"Ah, that's more like it."

Lament

RARE red gold on the pavement,
Spurned by the hurrying heel,
Would my typewriter could utter
All that I think and feel.
May the witless creature that tossed it
Thus wantonly down in the grime
Revisit the scene in the black-out
And slip up on his heinous crime.
Weep, weep for the shredded sunshine
Even this little bit would have made!
O rare red gold on the pavement
That might have been marmalade.

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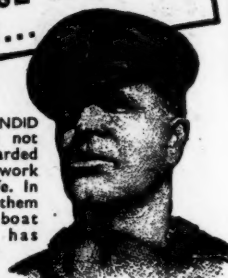
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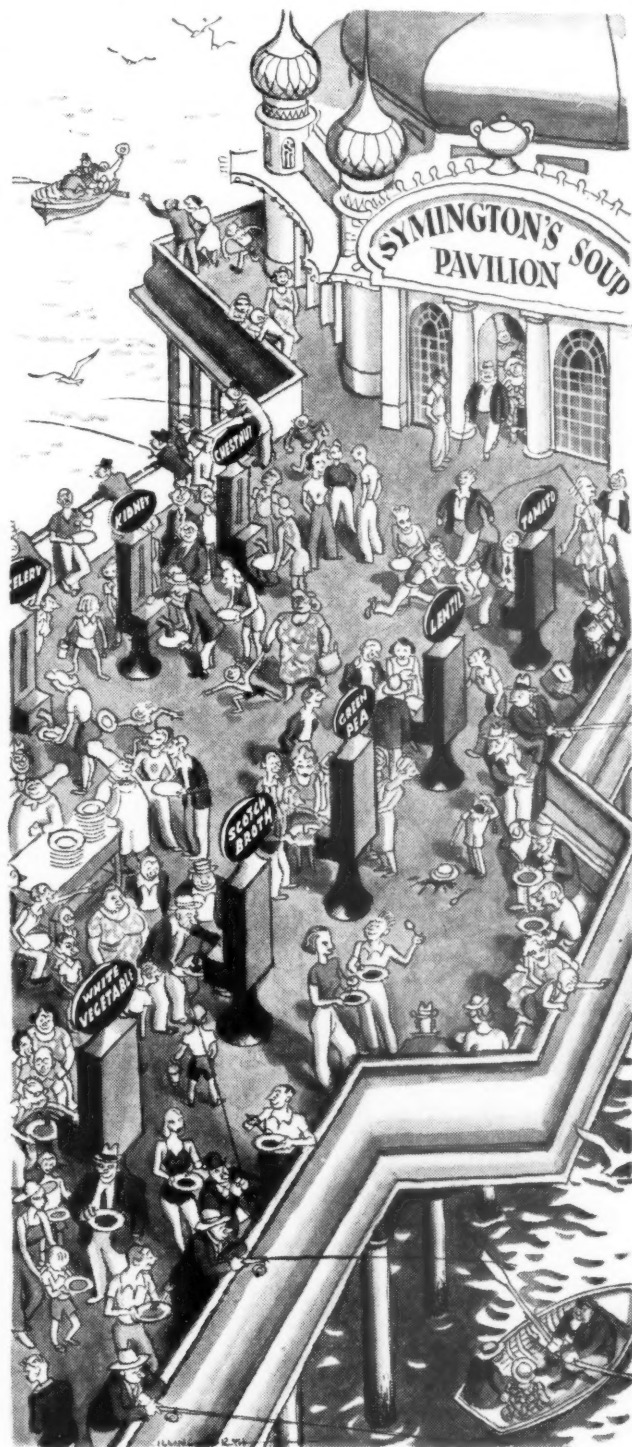
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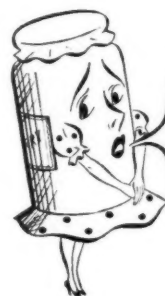
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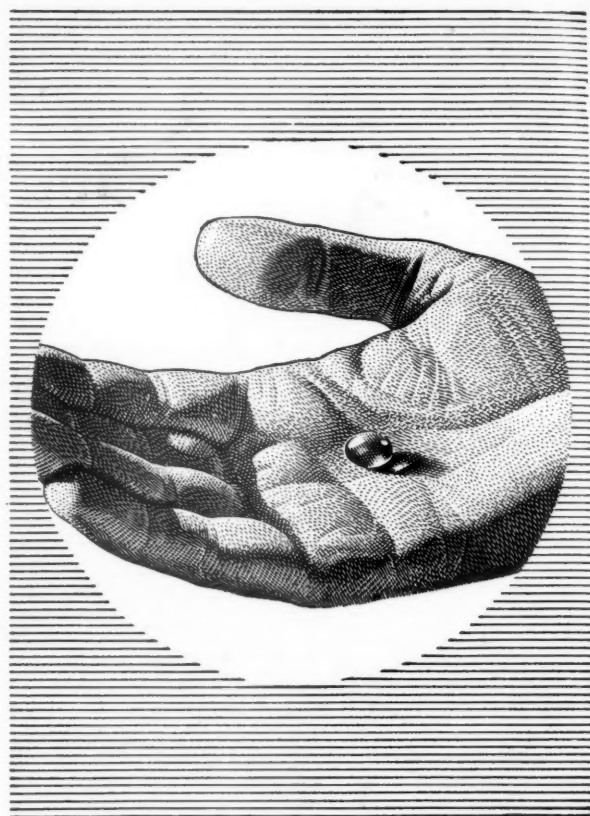
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